of virtue, and the grave reſpectability of ſenſe.

Beſides, the reading of novels makes women, and particularly ladies of faſhion, very fond of uſing ſtrong expreſſions and ſuperlatives in converſation; and, though the diſſipated artificial life which they lead prevents their cheriſhing any ſtrong legitimate paſſion, the language of paſſion in affected tones ſlips for ever from their glib tongues, and every trifle produces thoſe phoſphoric burſts which only mimick in the dark the flame of paſſion.

SECT. III.

IGNORANCE and the miſtaken cunning that nature ſharpens in weak heads as a principle of ſelf-preſervation, render women very fond of dreſs, and produce all the vanity which ſuch a fondneſs may naturally be expected to generate, to the excluſion of emulation and magnanimity.

I agree with Rouſſeau that the phyſical part of the art of pleaſing conſiſts in ornaments, and for that very reaſon I ſhould guard girls againſt the contagious fondneſs for dreſs ſo common

common to weak women, that they may not reſt in the phyſical part. Yet, weak are the women who imagine that they can long pleaſe without the aid of the mind, or, in other words, without the moral art of pleaſing. But the moral art, if it be not a profanation to uſe the word art, when alluding to the grace which is an effect of virtue, and not the motive of action, is never to be found with ignorance; the ſportiveneſs of innocence, ſo pleaſing to refined libertines of both ſexes, is widely different in its eſſence from this ſuperiour gracefulneſs.

A ſtrong inclination for external ornaments ever appears in barbarous ſtates, only the men not the women adorn themſelves; for where women are allowed to be ſo far on a level with men, ſociety has advanced, at leaſt, one ſtep in civilization.

The attention to dreſs, therefore, which has been thought a ſexual propenſity, I think natural to mankind. But I ought to expreſs myſelf with more preciſion. When the mind is not ſufficiently opened to take pleaſure in reflection, the body will be adorned with ſedulous care; and ambition will appear in tattooing or painting it.